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INFANT BAPTISM

AND THE

ABRAHAMIC COVENANT.

by

Mr. R. Govett,

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INFANT BAPTISM.

THAT many believers in the Lord Jesus are persuaded that Infant Baptism is of God, I do not doubt. The writer himself was once of that opinion. In the ensuing argument, then, he trusts to display no spirit but that of love towards those whom he addresses, while he suggests to them texts of Holy Writ, and considerations, destructive, (as he assuredly believes) of the views they entertain.

The great stronghold of the maintainers of Infant Baptism is generally considered to be the Abrahamic covenant. And the statement of the argument in its strongest form is as follows:—“The Abrahamic covenant is virtually the same with the Gospel; for we read, that—‘The Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.’” The principal difference is, that circumcision, which was the ancient seal of that covenant, has, in the wisdom of God, been changed for baptism now. Circumcision was the seal of the righteousness of faith under the Abrahamic covenant, baptism is the appointed seal of the same righteousness under the Gospel. As, then, infants were circumcised under the Abrahamic covenant, because of the divinely instituted connexion between themselves and their parents, so are the children of believing parents now to be baptized on the same ground. The descendants of believing Abraham were to be circumcised in their infancy: the children of believers are therefore to be baptized in their infancy.” Or, to give it in the words of a defender of Infant Baptism:—“The covenant with Abraham is the same in substance with that under which we live. The same blessings of that covenant are denoted both by circumcision and baptism. The

covenant then being the same, and the ordinance being in import the same, the subjects entitled to its administration are also the same. But infants were entitled to circumcision on the ground of their connexion with their parents; therefore infants, on the ground of their connexion with their parents, are entitled to baptism.”

The argument here rests upon one principal assumption. ‘There is but one great covenant with Abraham,—the covenant of circumcision; and under this believers of the present day are living.’ If this be false, the whole argument falls to the ground. In contradiction to this, I shall bring evidence to show—

I. That there were TWO COVENANTS with Abraham.

II. That the covenant of circumcision (on which the argument for Infant Baptism rests) is not the GOSPEL, but the LAW.

The proof of these two propositions is the destruction of the argument for Infant Baptism, as derived from the Abrahamic covenant. But I shall proceed to prove—

III. That circumcision was not the seal of the righteousness of faith to any but Abraham.

IV. That baptism is not the substitute for circumcision.

V. That baptism is not a seal at all.

VI. That it is not of the same meaning as circumcision.

VII. That there was not of old, and is not now, the supposed spiritual connexion between children and their parents.

I. Let us then advance to the proof of the first proposition. Not one covenant alone, but two were made with Abraham.

If so, the very expression, ‘THE *Abrahamic covenant*,’ carries with it the error on which the whole is based.

1. The first covenant made with Abraham is recorded in the same chapter that describes his justification by faith: (Gen. xv. 6.) Of this covenant we read—ver. 18. “In the same day the Lord made a *covenant* with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land.”

A second time does God present a covenant to Abraham in the seventeenth chapter. “I will make my *covenant* between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly:” ver. 2.

2. 'But may not these be but two different forms of the same covenant?' No: for Stephen recognizes them as distinct. The first covenant (in Gen. xv,) he first notices and rehearses. "He gave him none inheritance in it (this land,) no, not so much as to set his foot on; yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession; and to his seed after him, *when as yet he had no child.*" This fixes the time, of which Stephen is speaking, to Gen. xv, 4, 7, 18; or to some time before that; for in ch. xvi, Abraham had a son.

But that of which Stephen is speaking is fastened to ch. xv, by the words that follow. "And God spake on this wise, that his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them evil four hundred years. And the nation to whom they will be in bondage will I judge, said God: and after that they shall come forth and serve me in this place." This is a quotation from God's prophecy to Abraham in Gen. xv, 13—16.

Thus the *first covenant* is recognized by Stephen. But he adds. "*And he gave him the covenant of circumcision:*" Acts vii, 5—8. Here is then the *second covenant* with Abraham.

3. Moreover, that we have not mistaken the matter, Paul is a witness: for, writing to the Galatians, he says, "Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons; the one by the* bondmaid; the other by the* freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory; † for *these (women) ‡ are THE TWO COVENANTS, the one from the Mount Sinai which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.* For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above, is free, which is the mother of us all:" Gal. iv, 21—26

Here then we are informed, that as Abraham had two wives, so the meaning of this spiritually is, that

* Εκ της παιδίσκης.

* Εκ της ελευθεράς.

† Εστιν αλληγορουμενα, Or, "Are to be allegorized." ‡ Αυται.

with him were made two covenants. And these differed in their nature, as much as the bondslave Hagar differed from the freewoman, her mistress Sarah. And Paul uses this argument to retain in Gospel liberty those who were ready to fall back to the law. The argument then rests on this foundation : that in Abraham's person *both the law and the Gospel meet*, and are represented by his two wives. And from the treatment experienced by the wife who represented the Law, you may understand what will be your lot, if you identify yourself with the law.

It cannot be doubtful, I think, to which of the two covenants with Abraham Hagar answers. Hagar (says Paul) is equivalent to the covenant on Sinai,—or the law.—And Sarah therefore represents the covenant of grace.

Which covenant then, of the two made with Abraham, does Hagar represent? That of faith (ch. xv.) or that of circumcision? (ch. xvii.) That of *faith*, by which Abraham was justified? Or that of *circumcision*, by which he was not justified?

(1.) Hagar cannot answer to the covenant of faith and grace, for Hagar represents the law, and the law is not of faith : Gal. iii, 12. Hagar then represents, not the covenant of grace, (Gen. xv,) but the covenant of circumcision : (Gen. xvii.)

(2.) The covenant of bondage is Hagar's covenant. For Hagar was "the *bondmaid*," and she "gendereth to *bondage*:" Gal. iv, 22—24. But the covenant of circumcision is the covenant of bondage ; as saith the Apostle, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not entangled again with the *yoke of bondage*. Behold I Paul say unto you, that if ye be *circumcised*, Christ shall profit you nothing:" Gal. v, 12 ; Acts xv, 10. The covenant of circumcision therefore is Hagar's covenant.

(3.) Again, that covenant from which Paul dissuades the Galatians by threatened loss of the inheritance, is Hagar's covenant. But the covenant of circumcision is that against which the Apostle so earnestly pleads. That, therefore, is Hagar's covenant. And Hagar's covenant is the law, as Paul has already informed us. Therefore the covenant of circumcision (Gen. xvii) in

Abraham's day answers to the law : as the covenant of faith (Gen. xv.) answers (in part) to the Gospel.

(4.) But the proof that the first covenant with Abraham is virtually the Gospel, and the second covenant (of circumcision) is virtually the law, will be much strengthened by a comparison of the chapters. The reader is requested to study them for himself: and in order to a successful comparison, it is worthy of particular observation, that each of the covenants is divided into seven parts, corresponding with each other; the four first composing one great division, and the three last, another.

GEN. XV.

GEN. XVII.

Ver. Div. (*First Covenant.*)Ver. Div. (*Second Covenant.*)

1, 2.	1	} Encouragement Promise One Son, Heir As the Stars thy seed The Land	1-3	1	} Requirement Promise Father of nations God to thy seed after thee The land
3, 4.	2		4-6	2	
5, 6.	3		7	3	
7, 8.	4		8	4	
9-12	5	} Sacrifice Prophecy Covenant of gift	9	5	} Commandment Circumcision Covenant of flesh and works
13-16	6		10-13	6	
18-21	7		13-14	7	

The covenant of Gen. xv. is in spirit the Gospel; for

1. i. It is the covenant of peace, "*Fear not, Abram.*" This is the Spirit of the gospel: (Luke ii, 10.) And is not this speaker he who said to his apostle, "**FEAR NOT, I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore,**" Rev. 1, 17, 18.

ii. *God* is the reward promised here; and this is no earthly promise. But the answering promise of the second covenant is simply the fleshly promise of the multiplying of Abraham's seed, which is a promise of the law, Deut. viii, 1; xxx, 16.

2. Because this covenant pre-

The covenant of Chap. xvii, is the law; for,

1. i. It is the covenant of fear. The law is "*The Spirit of bondage to fear,*" Rom. viii, 15. Hence Abram takes the attitude of one afraid. He "*falls on his face.*" "*And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face and were sore afraid,*" Matt. xvii, 6, 7; Lev. ix, 24; Numb. xiv, 5; xii, 22, 45; 1 Chron. xxi, 16; Deut. vi, 2.

ii. It is a *mutual* covenant, God is to do his part, (Div. 2, 3, 4.) and man his, (Div. 5, 6, 7.) The opposite division is *encouragement*, this is *requirement*. And perfection is demanded, which is the requirement of the law, Lev. xxii, 21; Deut. xviii, 1, 3.

2. This gives us the *plural*

sents Abraham's *individual seed*; which, the apostle tells us, is *Christ*. Gal. iii, 16. And one special person is presented, who is to be the heir. Who is this? "His Son, whom he hath appointed *Heir of all things*," Heb. i, 2.

3. i. Because Abraham's seed is here presented in a gospel light, without the distinctions of sex, nation, station, as in the other covenant; and these distinctions are done away in Christ, Gal. iii, 28. Nay, their being like the stars is a glimpse of the resurrection glory. "Many of them *that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake* and they that turn many to righteousness *shall be as the stars for ever and ever*," Dan. xii, 2, 3. "One star differeth from another star in glory: so also is the resurrection of the dead," 1 Cor. xv, 41, 42.

ii. But especially is this the gospel, for it is the covenant of JUSTIFICATION. Paul appeals to this as the gospel, Rom. iv. 3, 9, 22; Gal. iii, 6. Abraham's spiritual and heavenly children are first presented; and thus Abraham's justification, which is the pattern of their own. And though many in number, as viewed by man, in God's eye they are but one in Christ, Gal. iii, 28.

4. It is the covenant of the *inheritance*.* Abraham, says Paul, attained the promise to be heir of the world through the righteousness of faith, Rom. iv.

5. It is the covenant of *certainty*. "Whereby shall I know that I shall *inherit it*?" The

seed; the *nations* that are to spring from Abraham. Yet this division is of faith, as given to *justified Abraham alone*, and rehearsing the former promise: Gen. xv, 5.

3. i. This is Abraham's seed "after him." The other covenant present's Abraham's seed which was *before him*, "Before Abraham was I am," John viii, 58. The present cannot be the covenant of grace, for this covenant is fixed to the line of natural generation; but grace does not run in that line, John i, 13: Rom. ix, 8.

ii Not only is the seed limited to Abraham's race, but *God himself takes a limited title, which is that of the law*. "A God to thee." "Thy God." But this is thrown down under the gospel, when Jew and Gentile are justified by faith, Rom. iii, 19.

4. Here the land of *Canaan* is definitely given for a *possession* to Abraham's fleshly seed; and the expression used is that of the law, Deut. xxxii, 49; Lev. xxv, 10—46.

5. In this, human performance and keeping of the covenant are required. *Here is no ground*

* Paul takes the expression of ver. 7. אַתְּ הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת in its widest sense, Το κληρονομοῦν εἶναι τοῦ κόσμου: for the gospel is the spirit, the law is taken in the letter. The one is construed by mercy and sovereignty; the other by justice.

ground given him is SACRIFICE, alike the ground of his justification and inheritance. The sacrifice is God's, and he calls it so. "Take me an heifer." "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end that the PROMISE MIGHT BE SURE TO ALL THE SEED," Rom. iv, 16.

6. On the ground of faith and the sacrifice, God lays open to Abraham his secret plans. This is the place of the *son*, knowing his Father's will. And the burden of the prophecy is of a gospel character; first suffering, afterward joy.

7. This is an unconditional deed of gift, confirmed by God unto Christ before the law. As then the promise rests simply on God's word, without any requirement on man's part, forfeiture cannot come in. This then must be the covenant of grace. The seed to whom the promise is made is Abraham's *individual seed*, not to "his seed after him," but to Christ.

I gather then assuredly that this covenant is *virtually the gospel*, for it is the covenant of *encouragement*, and of CHRIST presented as the HEIR, the SACRIFICE, AND THE SEED; it is the unconditional covenant of faith, justification, resurrection-glory, and the inheritance.

of *certainty*. 'If you would attain the preceding promises, you must observe the conditions.' "Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore." Such was the very charge at giving the law. "If ye will obey my voice indeed and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me," Exod. xix, 5.

6. Here God leaves man to himself and his own powers, and gives him laws. This is the place of the *servant* kept in ignorance of his master's design, for the meaning of circumcision is not given. And the act of circumcision is a thing of the flesh, and of the letter, Rom. ii, 27—29; Gal. vi, 12, 13. Even so the law is a thing of the letter and of the flesh, 2 Cor. iii. 6; Rom. iii, 20; vii, 5, 25.

7. This is a covenant in the flesh, "*My covenant shall be in your flesh.*" It ends with a threat and so with an opening for forfeiture. This also is of the law. "*The law worketh wrath.*" And the threat of being "cut off from his people," is a threat of the law of Moses, Exod. xxx, 33, 38; xii, 19; Lev. xxiv, 8, &c.

I conclude with confidence that this covenant is *virtually the law*, as a covenant in the flesh, the covenant by which Abraham was NOT JUSTIFIED; (Rom. iv) the covenant of fear, requirement, perfection, and threat, of human obedience and uncertainty, of the fleshly seed, and of forfeiture.

II. But as this is the great question in the present argument, I propose to adduce additional proofs, evincing beyond all reasonable doubt, that the covenant of circumcision is the law.

4. If the breach of the command of circumcision would be a breaking of Moses' law, circum-

cision is a part of that law. Hear then, the Savior. “*Moses* therefore gave unto you *circumcision*; (not that* it is of Moses, but *of the fathers*) and ye on the sabbath day *circumcise* a man. If a man on the sabbath day *receive circumcision*, *that the law of Moses should not be broken*, are ye angry at me because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day?” John vii, 22, 23. The Lord Jesus therefore, asserts *circumcision* to be a part of the law; so much so, that if the rite were not performed *on the eighth day (the time commanded in Abraham’s covenant also)* the law of Moses was broken. Therefore *circumcision* is of the law. He adds, that this rite of *circumcision* came not originally from Moses, but from “the fathers,” of whom Abraham was the chief: Matt. iii, 9. Thus then, *the circumcision of Abraham’s day is identified with the law of Moses. And as Paul traces it downwards from Hagar and Ishmael, through Sinai, to Jerusalem and its children then in bondage; so on the other hand does Jesus trace up the legal circumcision from Moses’ day to Abraham’s.* What further is wanting, to prove that the covenant of *circumcision* given to Abraham, is virtually and in essence the law?

5. When Paul went up to Jerusalem for the last time, the believing Jews, all of them “*zealous for the law,*” had received intelligence, that Paul taught the dispersed of their nation “*not to circumcise their children,* nor to walk after the customs.” This both they and the apostles considered equivalent to a “*forsaking Moses,*” or as it is in the original, “*apostacy from Moses.*” † To confute this mistake, the apostles requested Paul to join himself with those under a Nazarite vow, in proof of his “walking orderly and *keeping the law.*” Here *circumcision* is regarded both by the believing Jews, the apostles at Jerusalem, and Paul, as a part of the same law of Moses with Nazariteship and the other customs. But that which was so regarded by all the church of that day, cannot but be true. Therefore *circumcision* is a thing of the law.

* Οτι. So Bloomfield, “The sense is: ‘Not that it is of Moses, [but had been established by Abraham.]’” So Professor Scolefield, Beza, the Rhemish Testament, &c.

† Αποστασιαν διδασκεις.

6. Hear another witness. There were in the Galatian church certain Jewish teachers, who laboured to induce the disciples to be circumcised. Now in what light does Paul view this? "I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is *a debtor to do the whole law*," Gal. v, 3. If then the covenant to which circumcision bound a man is the law, the covenant to which circumcision belonged is the law.

And again in the same epistle,—“As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For *neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law*, but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh,” vi, 12, 13. Herein the apostle argues, that the only motive of the Jewish teachers in inducing Galatian believers to be circumcised was evil,—the desire to escape persecution: for the only right and proper motive was excluded from the case, by *their not keeping the law*. *If then the only legitimate reason of desiring circumcision was an intention to keep the whole law*, circumcision must be a thing of the law. But the first is true: therefore the last.

(a.) Now these examples shut up the only way of escape from the force of this argument that I am able to discover. For it might be said,—‘Granting you to have proved, that the covenant of circumcision was the law in Moses’ day, and thence onward up to Paul’s, still I am at liberty to distinguish between circumcision as *given to Abraham*; and circumcision as *commanded by Moses*.’ But this way of escape is closed: first by Paul’s tracing Hagar’s covenant from Abraham’s day down to his own, as unbrokenly one and the same; and secondly, by Jesus tracing it up from Moses’ day to Abraham’s as but one and the same throughout.

(b.) But further, any assumption that would destroy an inspired argument is false. But if the Jewish teachers might have said, ‘We receive circumcision, not as it is of Moses, binding us to the law; but as it is of Abraham, the seal of the covenant of faith,’ the distinction, if it were valid, would have destroyed the whole of the apostle’s argument. *It were possible then to assume circumcision, and yet not to be under the law*:

and the case of the two wives of Abraham were nothing to the point; for but one covenant had ever been given to Abraham, and that was the covenant of grace, of which circumcision was the appointed seal! This cannot be; therefore circumcision in Abraham's day is of the same character as when commanded by Moses.

7. Again, let us take Paul's argument in the Romans. In the first chapter, he impeaches the Gentile, and proves him guilty of many crimes and sins. In the second he convicts the Jew of transgression; describing him first generically, as one who judged others. In the 17th verse he addresses him openly, "Behold thou art called a Jew, and *resteth in the law* and approved the things that are more excellent, being instructed *out of the law* which hast the form of knowledge and of the *truth in the law.*" He then accuses him of not reducing his knowledge to practice, of theft, adultery, sacrilege. "Thou that makest thy *boast of the law*, through *breaking the law* dishonourest thou God?" He next fastens on their circumcision as a part of the law, and that on which they prided themselves; and he asserts its meaning to be, (as he had shown before to the Galatians) a bond to do the whole law. "*For circumcision verily profiteth if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.* Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision? And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, *who through* the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law?*" Rom. ii, 17—27. In other words, circumcision is but the sign, *the thing signified by it is obedience to the law.* If you have not this, the sign is made void; it represents a falsehood. Circumcision therefore belonged to the law, to which it signified obedience.

Obj. To this it may be replied—'Your conclusion must be false: for it contradicts inspired authority. The

* Τον δια γραμματος και περιτομης παραβατην νομου.
In these words the command and circumcision are described as a hedge through which the transgressor bursts, in order to transgress.

covenant of circumcision must be the covenant of faith, for Paul declares it to have been 'the seal of the righteousness of faith, Rom. iv, 11.'

(1.) Yes, we reply : but *to whom* was it a seal of the righteousness of faith ? To all the Jews, or to Abraham alone ? So far from circumcision having that meaning to the Jew in general, Paul speaks of it as *one of his merits under the law*, and a *part of the righteousness of the law*. "If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might *trust in the flesh*, I more ; *circumcised the eighth day*, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews ; as touching the law, a Pharisee ; concerning zeal, persecuting the church : *touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.*" And to this he opposes the righteousness of faith ; telling us, that for Christ's sake he had surrendered all these things (the merit of circumcision among the number) "that I may win Christ and be found in him, not having *mine own righteousness which is of the law*, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Phil. iii, 4—9. As then circumcision was a part of the righteousness of the law and rejected by Paul on believing in Christ, it could not be to the Jew in general a seal of the righteousness of faith ; for if so, on becoming a believer he would have gloried in it, and then first with joy and gratitude have discovered its true meaning.

(2.) The preceding passage from Romans proves the same thing. Circumcision was so far from signifying the righteousness of faith, that it set and bound a man *to keep the law*, and the moment that he failed *in that, it lost its meaning!* Had it been the seal of the righteousness of faith, it would have dissuaded a man from attempting to keep the law, and when he felt himself a transgressor, despaired of keeping it, and was led to look out for a better righteousness, *its significance, in place of being lost, would have just then come into open view.* But the moment he believed in Jesus, in place of its then attaining its height of meaning, as the seal of the covenant by which he was justified, it sunk into positive insignificance. "For in Christ Jesus

neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision," Gal. v, 6 ; Rom. ii, 25.

III. I come now to the direct consideration of the assertion, that circumcision was "the seal of the righteousness of faith." And the answer to the objection is very simple. It is, that circumcision was the seal of the righteousness of faith, *to Abraham alone.** For it occurs only in that chapter which deals confessedly and expressedly with Abraham's individual case alone. Paul had already treated the aspect of circumcision as regarded the Jew generally, in the second chapter, and then starts this objection—"What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?" At length he wound up his argument by affirming, that both the circumcised Jew and the uncircumcised Gentile would be justified by faith: iii, 30.

But the Jew, though he might receive this statement concerning himself, yet was slow to believe, that none of the holy men of his nation were justified by their merit and works. The apostle therefore presents *the especial case of Abraham:* (Rom. iv.) And now we shall see a confirmation of what has been observed before: for Paul deals with the question, *as though both the Gospel and the law were given to Abraham, and as if we could therefore in this case discern, by which of the two he was justified.* That, then, which he sets himself to prove is, that Abraham was *not justified by circumcision.* This he considers identical with the question whether *Abraham was justified by works of the law? Had Abraham been justified by circumcision, the Apostle virtually admits, that he was justified by works. He admits, and the Jew assumes, that circumcision was one of the works of the law.†*

* Thus the fallacy of the argument, logically considered, is *Fal-lacia a dicto secundum quid, ad dictum simpliciter.*

† "Let us remember that circumcision is here regarded, as being, so to speak, *the initial work of legal righteousness.* For neither did the Jews boast of it *as the sign of the grace of God, but as the meritorious observance of the law;* therefore they preferred themselves to others, as though possessed of superior excellence before God. We see now, that the question is raised not concerning a single rite alone, but that every kind of legal work is included under one species; that is, whatever might demand reward; and that circumcision is peculiarly mentioned, because it is *the foundation of legal righteousness.*" Calvin on Rom. iv, 10.

And he labors to prove, that he was not justified thereby; for, if he had been,—justification by faith had been overthrown, and justification by merit of the law had been brought in. He shews then, that Abraham was justified *before* he was circumcised; therefore he was not justified by circumcision. Nay further, he received the promise of the seed and of the inheritance, not through his obedience to that commanded work, but *before it*, through faith, as is seen in Gen. xv. “The promise that he should be heir of the world, was not to Abraham or to his seed, *through the law* (or circumcision) but through the righteousness of faith.”

But observe, that throughout the argument on justification, Abraham’s case alone is presented to us. In Rom. ii, the case of the Jew generally had been decided. That, then, which had been decided before, is not the subject of the fourth chapter. In other words, Abraham’s case alone is treated.

“What shall we say then that *Abraham our Father*, hath found as pertaining to the flesh? * For if *Abraham* were justified by works, *he* hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the scripture? ‘*Abraham* believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.’”

Paul then observes, that the last expression is a proof that God justified Abraham by faith. And then he adverts to the case of David, who declares that the man is justified and blessed,—not, who never sins—but whose sins were pardoned. This then was a surrender of justification by works, and an example of justification by faith.

“Cometh then this blessedness upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to *Abraham* for righteousness. How was it then reckoned? When *he* was in circumcision or in uncircumcision? *Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.*”

But the Jew might be ready to ask, If Abraham were justified without circumcision, what was the

* The order of the Greek requires this, *Ευηγγελισθη κατα σαρκα*, See Haldane, &c. So Bloomfield.

good of it *to him*? The reply is found in the next words.

“ And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised, that righteousness might be imparted unto them also. And the father of circumcision, to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham which he had being yet uncircumcised.”

(a.) Thus the whole has respect to the case of Abraham alone. *In his case* it might seem as though circumcision were useless; since to him it was not the sign of being bound to the law to seek justification through it; for he was already justified. The apostle, therefore, treats of his case alone, and tells us that TO HIM it was “ a* seal of the righteousness of the faith WHICH HE HAD WHILE UNCIRCUMCISED.” Abraham had faith before he was circumcised; HIS CHILDREN WERE ALL CIRCUMCISED BEFORE THEY HAD FAITH, and therefore, before they were righteous by faith. It could not, therefore be to them the seal of *their* righteousness by faith, as it was to Abraham the seal of *his* righteousness by faith.

(b.) But there is another peculiarity in Abraham's case; and in circumcision, as applied to him. To him circumcision signified, “ THAT HE SHOULD BE THE FATHER OF ALL THAT BELIEVE.” This privilege is Abraham's alone. Circumcision as a seal of the righteousness of faith belonged to Abraham as the father of all believers; and therefore circumcision had this meaning to himself alone.

(c.) Again, if Abraham's relation to Hagar was peculiar, his relation to the covenant of circumcision was peculiar also. For his relation to Hagar represented his relation to the covenant of circumcision. But the relation of Abraham to Hagar, being that of husband to the wife, was peculiar. Therefore the rela-

* Σφραγιδα της δικαιοσυνης. Observe, that the first word is without the article, contrary to classic usage, since the article attends on the construct noun. But by this it is intended, I believe, to signify, that it was then “ a seal of the righteousness of faith: ” *the true seal would be given afterwards.*

tion of Abraham to the covenant of circumcision was peculiar also. So with Sarah also; they both were wives of none but Abraham. And none but Abraham was to be their husband. To others, they were related as *mothers*, not as *wives*. *That is, then, the relationship of Abraham was special*, belonging to himself alone; and what is said of *his* circumcision, does not apply to *his descendants*.

Abraham was to be the father of a double seed; as he was the head of two covenants, and husband of two wives, by each of which he had a son. He was to be the father of a fleshly seed, of those sprung from his loins. These were the *circumcised* Israelites, whom the apostle calls his seed "*of the law:*" v, 16. The other seed was to be those who should be sons of *Abraham's faith*, whether circumcised or uncircumcised. "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end (that) the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law (the circumcision) but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham." And as Abraham has *two seeds*, so there are *two circumcisions*: one of the flesh for the fleshly seed; one of the *heart, for the spiritual seed*. On the ground of faith alone can Gentile Christians be sons of Abraham. This is the true circumcision, which we who believe partake of. "For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, neither is that *circumcision which is outward in the flesh*. But he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and *circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter*, whose praise is not of men, but of God:" Rom. ii, 28, 29.

I conclude, therefore, that circumcision was the seal of the righteousness of faith, TO ABRAHAM ALONE.

To return then to the former line of argument. It was shown that circumcision is of the law. The covenant of circumcision given to Abraham, when expanded and ratified, became the law of Moses. *But if circumcision be of the law, and not of the gospel, the main argument for Infant Baptism is at an end*. For it was pleaded that the Abrahamic covenant of circumcision was virtually the GOSPEL, and we have found it to be virtually the LAW! Then the question is over. May

we grope our way back to Moses, in order to patch the gospel with the law? May we mend the coat of skin with the fig leaf? May we piece the substance with the shadow?

1. The question—How shall we act in the matter? has long since been decided for us. A question the same in principle occurred in the early church, and was adjudged by the Holy Ghost. It was proposed in the Apostles' days to require circumcision of the Gentiles that believed, because the Gospel hope of justification was not sufficient alone. This deadly error was combated by the Holy Spirit, and ejected everywhere, though we see it perpetually endeavouring to force an entrance. But in our day, not the *act* of circumcision is pleaded for, but the *principles* of it. Nor is it demanded as necessary to justification, but to remedy a supposed defect in the law of baptism.

But in the decision given on the question in its more open form, we shall find the answer to the question propounded now; and shall discover, as we proceed, confirmatory proofs of the propositions that have been already arrived at. "Certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren—Except ye be *circumcised after the manner of Moses*, ye cannot be saved." "There rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to *circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.*"

Here the identity of the covenant of circumcision with the law of Moses, is assumed as before. But how does inspiration meet the proposal? Peter replies that it was a 'tempting God,' and the putting an intolerable yoke upon the necks of the converts. "Now, therefore, why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the necks of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?" Acts xv, 10.

And this was the decision of the whole assembly of apostles and elders: "Certain which went out from us have *troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, ye must be circumcised and keep the law:*" 24. Is it then a *subversion of the soul* to revive the *act of circumcision* as binding on the Gentile, and yet good Christian doctrine to admit or enforce the *principles of*

circumcision? Can it be right to denounce the act, and yet to maintain the principles by which the act is administered? The condemnation of the whole law of circumcision must be the condemnation of its parts. *To bring in circumcision were, as all confessed in that day, to bring in the law of Moses. May we then bring in a part of the law, though not the whole? May we set up its principles, though not carry out its acts?* Nay, it is either wholly the law, or wholly the gospel! If you touch any part of the law, you must take up the whole, or be cursed, Gal. x, 3. The act and its regulating principles are of the same kind. If the act be good, so are the regulating principles of the act. *If the act be denounced as evil to us, so are the principles of it denounced also.* “If the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches:” Rom. xi, 16. *But the law of circumcision is denounced by inspiration as the yoke of bondage, and the subversion of the soul. So then are the parts of the law—the principles of the act.* And even thus does Paul decide, “*Cast out the bondwoman and her son.*” Such as the son is, such is the mother. Such as the act is, such are the regulating principles by which it is administered; for the hand of God moulded the whole of its law. *And if circumcision be rejected, so must the principles of its covenant be cast out too.* “A little leaven,” saith Paul, in writing hereon, “leaveneth the whole lump.” To reject the act and to retain its laws, were to cast out the *son*, and to retain the *mother*. But the judgment of the scripture is, “*Cast out the bondwoman and her son.*”

2. On another occasion, the apostle enforces the same lessons. In the most energetic language Paul warns the Galatian church. “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not entangled again with *the yoke of bondage*. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if *ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing*. For I testify again to every man *that is circumcised that he is a debtor to do the whole law*. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace:” Gal. v, 1—4. Such language as this, while it in the strongest possible terms reprobates *th*

act of circumcision, carries with it no less assuredly the condemnation of the *principles of circumcision*. If the *act* of circumcision be to the believer an *entanglement in the yoke of bondage*, can the *laws* of circumcision be the *principles of freedom*? If the *act* be *apostacy*, can the *principles* regulating the act be *edifying in the faith*? If the *performance of circumcision* bound to keep the whole law, can its *principles* teach the whole Gospel? If to be *circumcised* be to fall from grace, can the law concerning male infants be a part of the covenant of grace?

Could St. Paul have maintained his ground at all against the Jewish teachers on modern pædobaptist principles? ‘You must allow,’ they would have said, ‘that the *principles* of the covenant of circumcision are to be our guides in baptism. It cannot then be a falling away from grace to carry out the *act* of circumcision, for the act is but the upshot and expression of the principles: the whole law is of the same character with its parts. What reason then can you give for choosing this portion of the law of circumcision rather than the other? But Paul’s reply is—‘The whole is deadly—Forbear!’ If circumcision were a seal of the covenant of grace, Paul’s zeal against circumcision is not to be explained. Why might not a man prefer the *old* seal of the covenant, to baptism, the *new*? or, in proof of his full loyalty to the covenant of grace, accept *both* the seals? If the Queen of England were to appoint a new national flag beside the Union Jack, would it be *treason* to hoist the old one, whether alone or in company with the new?

3. The language of Paul, and of the whole New Testament whenever circumcision is spoken of to Gentiles, is invariably one of warning. “Beware of dogs; beware of evil workers, *beware of the concision* (or ‘mutilation,’ i.e. the literal circumcision.) *For we are the circumcision*, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh:” Phil. iii, 2, 3. Were they who preached circumcision *then* “*evil workmen*” of whom the church was to “beware?” And can those who preach the principles of circumcision *now* be *good workmen* whom the church is to cherish? He who is warned against the whole of circumcision is warned against a part. What

would a father think of an adviser, who should express the utmost abhorrence of open infidelity, and his hope that his son would never be found among infidels, and yet advise him to read the works of the deists, and be guided by the regulations of their societies? What would you think of the man who should express the greatest abhorrence of Popery, and yet should recommend you to say Ave-Marias, and to cross yourself?

4. Again, I would draw another argument from the inconsistency, the *necessary* inconsistency, of those who maintain hereby the baptism of infants. They hold that circumcision is *abolished* by Christ, and has made way for baptism in its stead. Then our duty as regards it, is clear. If the statute be in force, let us keep the act to the letter! *Is it abolished? Then both the act and its law are abolished also.* Again, is circumcision abolished by Christ, and yet is circumcision not of the law? *Is any part of the covenant of grace abolished by Jesus?* It cannot be. If circumcision, then, be abolished, it is a proof that it is not of grace, but of the law.

5. Again, if the principles of the covenant of circumcision are to be our guides, they must all be carried out. You are not at liberty to fasten on one, and let the rest flow by. (1.) If infants are to be baptized on the strength of it, it can be only *male* infants; *for these alone are recognized by that covenant as subjects of circumcision.* (2.) If that is to be our guide, the baptism is to be *on the eighth day alone, and any time before or after that is a sin.* For by what principles of reasoning can we conclude *from the command to circumcise male infants at eight days old, that therefore we may baptize female infants at any time we will?* (3.) By the same covenant it follows, that baptism may be *compulsory* to all the slaves of a master when he believes. Do you start at this? Nay, but it is a legitimate principle of the same Abrahamic covenant on which you rest! Take all the principles or none!

6. But the flaw lies deeper yet. What right have we to meddle with the literal provisions of the covenant of circumcision at all! We are not Abraham's literal seed. We are not descendants of Sarah, Hagar, or Keturah. *Let the LITERAL seed of Abraham take it*

LITERALLY! *The only application of it to us—Abraham's SPIRITUAL seed—must be SPIRITUAL!* And then the argument for infant baptism is at an end: for the infants are *spiritual infants*, that is, young believers in Jesus.

7. The truth is, that THE LAW OF BAPTISM STANDS OPPOSED TO THAT OF CIRCUMCISION. *Baptism levels distinctions set up in the covenants of Abraham and Moses; and sets up others unknown to them.* Circumcision and its law made distinctions—1. Of sex, as male or female. 2. Of natural birth, or nation: as Jewish or Gentile. 3. Of station, as slaves or master. Now Paul contrasts this state of things with what was effected by the law of baptism. After he had discoursed of the shutting up under the law till Christ came, he proceeds—“Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. *For as many as were baptized into Christ put on* Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus,*” Gal. iii, 26—28.

Circumcision was administered *exclusively to males*. Baptism is administered *indiscriminately to males and females*. Circumcision was performed *indiscriminately as to faith*; on slaves and captives and infants, whatever the state of the parents' hearts. It is sought to apply baptism *exclusively to believers and their children*.

8. But all perplexity is done away, when we see how it is that circumcision does apply. The old and shadowy circumcision was a thing of the flesh and of the letter, Rom. ii, 27. The true circumcision is that of the heart and spirit, 28, 29. Hence Paul barely admits that the literal circumcision is to be so called. “Ye being Gentiles in the flesh who are called uncircumcision by that *which is called the circumcision in the flesh made by hands,*” Eph. ii, 11. But the circumcision of those who believe, *is spiritual*. “Ye are complete in him, who is the head of all principality and power, in whom also *ye were circumcised † with the circumcision made without hands,* in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ,” Col. ii, 10, 11. *Here Christ's circumcision is “without hands,” or spiritual; in opposition to Moses' circumcision which*

* Aorists.

† Aorist.

was with hands, or fleshly. Moses' circumcision puts off a portion of the flesh; Christ's, puts off the body of sin. The law of circumcision then is fulfilled by the believer spiritually. "*For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh,*" Phil. iii, 3. But if the law of circumcision is fulfilled *spiritually in him who believes,* it is not to be fulfilled *in the literal infant who does not believe.* Paul then has decided the question how circumcision applies to us. *It applies spiritually: and therefore the parties contemplated by it are not infants of the flesh, but spiritual babes in Christ.*

IV. I come now to treat of another of the principles on which the argument for infant baptism is founded. 'Baptism is the substitute for circumcision, and has taken its place.'

1 Now this proposition has been already overthrown by the arguments which manifested, that the covenant of circumcision is not the same covenant as the gospel, but is indeed the law. *If then circumcision belongs to the law, and baptism to the gospel, it is manifest that baptism is not the substitute for circumcision. They belong to two different economies, and one can never stand in the place of the other.*

2. This idea wars also against plain fact. If baptism had been the substitute for circumcision, it would not have begun till circumcision had ceased, nor would baptism have been applied to those who were already circumcised. The establishment of the one had been the removal of the other. But nothing like this took place! Baptism began in John Baptist's day, and was carried on by the Saviour while circumcision was still in full authority. It was by God's command required of those already circumcised, and submitted to by them. After the Savior's ascension, on the day of Pentecost the Jews who believed, although circumcised, were baptized.

3. So far from this doctrine being held in apostles' days, the Pharisees aimed at bringing Gentile believers under the yoke of circumcision.

4. Nor at the council of Jerusalem, do apostles even hint, that baptism had come in the place of circumcision, and that therefore baptized Gentiles had no need of cir-

cumcision ; though this would have been the most natural and direct answer. Nor does Paul notice this obvious argument in his epistle to the Galatians, even though the Judaizers sought to compel Titus to be circumcised.

5. Nay further, Paul, that stout champion for gospel liberty, himself circumcised Timothy, (Acts xvi, 3,) though doubtless he had been baptized before as a "disciple" of the Lord Jesus.*

6. Nay, and we learn farther, that so far from accounting circumcision to be set aside by baptism, the believing Jews still circumcised their children, and imputed it as a high crime and misdemeanor to Paul, that he taught the Jews of the dispersion to give up this practice. Now pædobaptists would say, Paul was perfectly right in doing so. *But no! First the information was false; Paul had not so taught them.* Secondly, the apostles would have condemned him, had he done so. Thirdly, at the suggestion of the other apostles, *Paul took a mode of showing them that his doctrine was no such thing, but that he himself KEPT THE LAW, and could not therefore teach any Jews to break it by setting aside circumcision.* Therefore circumcision is of the law, and baptism does not occupy its place. The apostles in urging him to this, make the concession for which Paul contended, that *the Gentiles should be free.* This being granted him, he felt able to acquiesce as a Jew in the rites given to his nation. "All may know that those things whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou thyself walkest orderly and keepest the law. As touching *the Gentiles which believe* we have written and concluded that **THEY** observe no such thing." (as circumcision,) Acts xxi, 21—25.

What can more clearly confute the idea in question than this scene and statement? *Baptism is applied to the circumcised! Circumcision is maintained and practised even by the baptized!* Believing Pharisees desire to add circumcision to the Gentiles, as a *distinct rite* carrying with it *another doctrine.* Nay, and while

* Some have wondered at the seeming inconsistency of Paul in these two instances. But Timothy was circumcised, because his mother was a *Jewess*, Acts, xvi, 1. Titus was not, because he was *wholly a Gentile*, Gal. ii. 3.

apostles oppose this their design, they do it on another principle altogether. And in place of confessing that baptism was the seal of the covenant of mercy and the gospel, *they denounce circumcision as bringing with it another covenant and an intolerable yoke!*

V. Next, baptism is not a SEAL at all.

First, let us for a moment grant, both that baptism takes the place of circumcision, and that it is the seal of the righteousness of faith; still the baptism of the *believer* only will follow. For Abraham is the pattern of our justification by faith, and therefore of the affixing of the seal of that righteousness which belongs to his spiritual seed. But Abraham “received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had *yet being uncircumcised.*” Therefore his spiritual seed should receive ‘*the sign of baptism, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which they have yet being unbaptized.*’ Not till after faith then ought they to be sealed. ‘In whom also, AFTER THAT YE BELIEVED, YE WERE SEALED,’ Eph. i. 13. But then infant baptism is destroyed, for in this *the sealing precedes faith.*

2. But next we withdraw our momentary admission. There is no proof that ever it is so called in Scripture; of which take Baxter, (a pædobaptist,) as a witness. “Some sober men, no way inclined to anabaptism, do think that we ought not to call the sacraments *seals*, as being a thing not to be proved by the Word.”*

3. It has not the nature of a seal. *For a seal is a visible, permanent impression, annexed to a covenant, order, or promise.* Such was circumcision. But baptism leaves no perceptible, no permanent trace. The baptized are not distinguishable from the unbaptized. It is not therefore a seal at all. But has the new covenant then no seal? Yes, the gifts of the Holy Ghost; as scripture more than once testifies. “In whom also after that ye believed *ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise*, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession,” Eph. i, 13. “Grieve not *the Holy Spirit of God* whereby (by whom) *ye were sealed unto the day of redemption,*” Eph. iv. 30. “He that anointed us is *God, who also*

* Apology against Mr. Blake, p. 116, s. 64.

*sealed** us and gave *us the *earnest of the Spirit* in our hearts," 2 Cor. i. 22. With this seal was Jesus himself ineffably impressed. "For him *God the Father sealed*" *John vi, 27. "For God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him," John iii, 34. "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power," Acts x, 3.

VI. Much less is baptism of *the same import* as circumcision.

Circumcision intimated the necessity of the *sanctification* of the flesh, and the removal of its evil desires, and of the evil heart of unbelief. Hence those under justification by their obedience are commanded to carry out its significance; as we read—"Circumcise therefore the foreskin of *your heart* and *be no more stiffnecked*," Deut. x, 16. "If they shall confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that they also have walked contrary to me If then *their uncircumcised heart be humbled*, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity, then will I remember my covenant with Jacob," Lev xxvi, 40—42. Here "uncircumcised" is equivalent to "unsanctified;" for under the law, holiness was to be the way to justification. So again—"To whom shall I speak, and give warning that they may hear? Behold *their ear is uncircumcised and they cannot hearken; behold the word of the Lord is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it*," Jer, vi, 10. So for a final instance of circumcision signifying sanctification. "*Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost*," Acts vii, 51.

Circumcision signified the trial of man by the attempted removal of the evil of the flesh.

But does baptism signify this? Nay, it signifies that the flesh is incurably evil, and no more to be put upon its trial, but buried out of sight. Hence God sent baptism first to Israel, with the declaration that they were all sinners, and that their hopes of justification by Moses' law were vain. It was sent with the cry—"Repent ye!" Now repentance is the overthrow of hope from the law, for it implies the confession of sin. *While then*

* Aorists.

circumcision is the sign of the law's hope, baptism is its destruction! Baptism is a burial into the death of Jesus Christ. "So many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death. Therefore we were buried* with him by baptism into death," Rom vi, 3, 4; Col. ii, 12. *Does circumcision signify this?* Baptism signifies our *justification* in Christ through death and resurrection with Jesus. *Does circumcision signify this?* Baptism signifies the washing away of sins, Acts xxi, 16; ii, 38. *Where does circumcision signify this?* *The law does not admit of the confession of sin, without the curse.* Circumcision does not testify the pardon of sin. It began before sin was actual, in the infant of eight days old.

Obj. 'But this view of yours makes the privileges of the gospel narrower, and its mercy more exclusive, than under the law.'

This is a strange objection. First, as to privilege. What you call a *privilege*, Peter and Paul call a *yoke*, Acts xv, 1, 10; Gal. v, 1—3. Circumcision, observe, was enjoined under the threat of cutting off. Are *privileges* required of men *under penalty*? Next, as to the mercy being narrower. Which is widest, the mercy that extends only to the Jew, or that which welcomes believers, male or female of every nation under heaven, whether Jew or Gentile, barbarian or Scythian, bond or free?

VII. Again, some have pleaded that in Abraham's day a divinely appointed spiritual connexion subsisted between parents and their children, a connexion which continues till now. (1) This is not true. *There was no spiritual connexion between even Abraham and his natural seed.* Infants, even of Abraham's family, were rejected. What spiritual connexion was there between Abraham and his son Ishmael, or between Abraham and that "profane person Esau?" (2) John the Baptist in his preaching vigorously assailed and demolished this refuge of error. "Think not to say within yourselves, *We have Abraham for our father.*" "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the deeds of Abraham:" John viii, 39. (3) And Paul, treading in

* Aorist.

the same steps, assures us, that Abraham was not counted the father of those that naturally sprung from him, unless, beside their circumcision, they had faith also. (4) And the same thing is more evident still. Are all the sons of believing parents believers? Far from it. Grace does not run in the line of natural generation and birth. “*That which is born of the flesh is (only) flesh.*” The connexion, then, is not that of the spirit. Let the question of election come in, and the cause of Infant Baptism yawns with a yet wider and deeper gulf. You must tell us which among the seed of believers will be saved, before this preliminary difficulty is got rid of. Not that even the certainty of election were enough. Even the knowledge by inspiration that a child was regenerate, were not enough. Baptism hangs on “the *answer* of a good conscience.”

Finally, it has been shown, that there were two covenants with Abraham, by both external and internal proofs; and that the covenant of circumcision, from which the argument for Infant Baptism is derived, is not the gospel but the law. This has been proved, by the words of the Savior, the admissions and belief of the apostolic church, by Paul’s argument against the righteousness of the law, his exhortations against circumcision, and by his statement of it as a merit of the law.

It has been proved, that circumcision was not the seal of the righteousness of faith to any but Abraham—his standing being altogether peculiar, and different from that of his fleshly descendants; for he was justified before circumcision, the only father of all believers, and head of the two covenants.

It has been manifested, that the parts of the law of circumcision are to be rejected—from the rejection of the whole by the council at Jerusalem, from Paul’s testimony that it bound to the law, and that its fulfilment in us is spiritual.

It was proved, that the pædobaptist argument is inconsistent. For if circumcision be abolished, then is it a thing of the law, and its force to us is null; while if it be in force, males only are to be baptized and on the eighth day. It was shown, that the principles of circumcision and baptism, far from being alike, are contrasted.

That Baptism is not the substitute of circumcision, was proved, from their belonging to two different covenants, and from its contradiction to facts. That it is not a seal was shown, from the confessed deficiency of scripture proof, and from its not having the nature of a seal. It was evinced, that it was not of the same import, either as it regards justification or sanctification.

Lastly, it was argued, that there is no spiritual connexion between believing parents and their seed, from Abraham's history, John the Baptist's appeal, Jesus' declaration, Paul's denial, and present fact.

Let none mistake the bearing of the present argument. It is not simply intended to show, that the argument from the Abrahamic covenant is inconclusive. That, indeed, is one branch of the proof. For,

If the covenant of circumcision be virtually the law—if it be abolished—or if baptism be not the substitute for circumcision, the argument from the Abrahamic covenant of circumcision is broken. If circumcision be a deadly chaining to the law—a falling from grace—condemned by the council at Jerusalem—the subject of Paul's energetic warnings—if it be the bondwoman that is to be cast out—if its principles are opposed in all the great distinctions to those of baptism—on all or any of these grounds, the argument for Infant Baptism from the covenant of circumcision, is not only good for nothing, but to be abandoned by all who reverence God's word.

But the argument CONCLUDES ALSO IN FAVOR OF THE BAPTISM OF BELIEVERS. If circumcision be to us *spiritual*, the subjects of it must be *spiritual infants*, or young converts. If the believer be Abraham's *spiritual seed*, circumcision is to be regarded by him spiritually, and thus the literal infant of the covenant of circumcision becomes the spiritual infant, or "one of these little ones that believe." as before; and the baptism of believers is proved. If the case of Abraham's justification be, as the apostle teaches, the pattern for all the justified by faith—if Paul's words are to be our guide, "*after that ye believed ye were sealed*"—the seal is not to be affixed till after faith. Thus, while the covenant of circumcision does not conclude for Infant Baptism, it positively concludes for the baptism of believers only!

Brethren in the Lord, search and see ! Are you not, in upholding the covenant of circumcision, infecting the Gospel with the leaven of the law ? that leaven which was so carefully purged out by Paul ? Are you not in the Scripture view *preaching circumcision*, the very rumor of which Paul so strongly puts away from himself ? Gal. v, 11. John the Baptist was commissioned to throw down the doctrine that parentage is efficacious in the Gospel dispensation. Are you not building it again ? Have you not been introducing a part of that which the Apostles rejected wholly at the great council of Jerusalem ? Are not the members of Christ to be living stones alone, and not the children of the flesh ? Is not the essence of baptism, that which an infant can never have—the answer of a good conscience before God ? Can you therefore—*dare you, remembering whose servants you are, go on either to preach or uphold the baptism of unbelieving infants ?*

Search and look ; for of these things you must give account ! How sad to find, in the day that shall try your work, that you have built up hay and stubble on the true foundation, to see your work burned, and to suffer loss by Christ's sentence ! Be warned !

THE END.

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